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Among the extravagances invented as Newes likely to be eagerly received, are the following—

ACT III.—SCENE II.

Fulton, Thomas, and Cymbal.

F. And from Florence.

T. They write was found in Galilæo's study,

A burning-glass (which they have sent him too)

To fire any fleet that's out at sea——

C. By moonshine, is't not so?

T. Yes, Sir, i'the water.

P. They write here, one Cornelius-Son

Hath made the Hollanders an invisible eel

To swim the haven at Dunkirk, and sink all

The shipping there.

T. But how is't done?

C. I'll shew you, Sir.

It is an Automa, runs under water,

With a snug nose, and has a nimble tail

Made like an augre, with which tail she

wriggles

Betwixt the costs of a ship, and sinks it

straight.

F. Spinola has a new project,

To bring an army over in cork-shoes,

And land them here at Harwich; all his

horse

Are shod with cork, and fourscore pieces

of ordnance,

Mounted upon cork-carriages, with blad-

ders

Instead of wheels, to run the passage over

At a spring-tide.

FYNES MORYSON'S DESCRIPTION OF IRELAND.

LEST the reader should not be entirely acquainted with the character and history of the personage, who bore when on earth the name of Fynes Moryson, I will take the liberty of writing a very few words on that head, which may form a proper preamble to this paper, and render it more clear and satisfactory. Be it understood then, that Fynes was Secretary to that noble gentleman and gallant captain, the Lord Mountjoy, deputy of this kingdom during the two or three last years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth; that he was a man of various talents and acquirements, and like other persons possessed of such blessings, thought proper to commit to his tablets the thoughts, words, and actions of himself and others, and to leave behind him several printed books of his own composing, for the praises or censures, the instruction or misinformation of posterity. Now, as might naturally be expected, the works of our Secretary, consisting of three or four goodly volumes, chiefly relate to that people and nation, of whose manners, his calling, and his peregrinations with his noble master, enabled him to see so much:—yet notwithstanding his pretensions and his dignity, he has, if several erudite and cunning antiquaries may be trusted, so far abused his opportunities, and turned a traitor to posterity, as to deliver in the said productions divers gross untruths, to the disgrace of himself as a faithful historian, and to the discredit of the ancient kingdom of which he has written.

Without pretending to go deeply into the matter, without referring to grave authorities for refutations, or getting at all

angry with Mr. Secretary, which has been a very customary, but a very silly mode of proceeding—because he has now been peacefully sleeping with his fathers for a couple of centuries—I merely propose to dissect, with all possible brevity and decorum, some half dozen of pleasant observations, which occur in his rare and curious tract, called *A Description of Ireland*, especially in that part of it which treats of the diet or housekeeping of our respected progenitors.

“The meer Irish,” to use the words of the learned Secretary, “are barbarous and most filthy in their Diet. They skum the seething Pot with an handful of Straw, none of the cleanest, and strain their Milk taken from the Cow through a like handful of Straw, and so cleanse or rather more defile the pot and Milk. They devour great Morsels of Beef unsalted, and they eat commonly Swine’s Flesh, seldom Mutton; and all these Pieces of Flesh, as also the Intrails of Beasts unwashed, they seeth in a hollow tree, lapped in a raw Cows-hide; and so set over the Fire, and therewith swallow whole lumps of filthy Butter.”

Dairymaids, cooks, and scullions of old! were you ever guilty of such tricks? Did you not think of the shame which you were bringing on your successors in the land, when perpetrating such enormities? Your arch-enemy has written a book to bring you into contempt with the nations; and have you left nor pot, nor pan, nor gridiron, to tell the knave he lies?—But, upon a second examination, I am disposed to think that this paragraph is not so very discreditable to our ancestors as might at first sight appear; for does not Mr. Secretary expressly affirm that the natives were accustomed to use a deal-board frying-pan—a pot made of oak-staves? What else can be inferred from his assertion, that they boiled their victuals in a hollow tree? Undoubtedly, the oak, or fir, or black birch, or whatever the wooden pot was composed of, was prepared to resist the fire by some ingenious chemical preparation, now, alas! lost for ever to the world; so that what honest Fynes supposed to be a convincing proof of the barbarity of the Irish nation, turns out to be the most cogent argument which has ever yet been brought in favour of its early refinement and civilization.

We are next made acquainted with the Irish method of warming milk.

“They drink Milk like Nectar, warmed with a Stone first cast into the Fire; or else Beef-broath mingled with Milk.”

The dirty dogs!—What a base and horrid intermixture!—

Can any man, possessed of as much brains as will keep him free of the madhouse, believe for a moment that a people, capable of making, as Mr. Moryson himself informs us, "the best Usquebagh of any in the World," (a difficult and complicated manufacture,) should at the same time follow so barbarous a practice as that of warming a fluid with a red-hot stone? I leave the remainder of this paragraph to be carefully conned and digested by country farmers, and all others whom it may more particularly concern.

"But when these foresaid wild Irish come to any Market-Town to sell a Cow or a Horse, they never return home till they have drunk the price in Spanish Wine (which they call the King of Spain's Daughter,) or in Irish Usquebagh, and till they have outslept two or three Days Drunkenness. And not only the common Sort, but even the Lords and their Wives, the more they want this Drink at home, the more they swallow it when they come to it, till they be as drunk as Beggars."

Our Secretary as he proceeds appears to wax warm, and to contradict himself with great coolness; for he immediately declares, that "the Irish desire no broath, nor have any use of a spoon;" in direct opposition to the preceding extract, which acquaints us with a potation made from two articles extremely opposite in their nature. But he sums up the whole of the barbarity of this people relative to their diet, in one short, conclusive, and appalling sentence—namely—"they neither know how to seethe *artichokes*, nor to eat them when they are sodden;"—which remarkable circumstance can only be accounted for by conjecturing that the population was at this time quite too busily employed in learning how to seethe potatoes, and to eat them when they were sodden; an act, in which, I am happy to inform the ghost of Mr. Moryson (if this article should happen to meet its eye) they have acquired by practice and perseverance such exceeding skill, as to be the delight and admiration of surrounding nations. But it is really most idle and absurd, to charge a people with barbarism, because of their want of acquaintance with the vegetable hedge-hog, still rare, still almost unknown in the kingdom; and it has a peculiarly ludicrous effect, when coupled with the serious and important aspersions which Mr. Moryson has cast upon the Irish.

I leave the following curious sentence to be decided on by the judicious reader.

"It is strange and ridiculous, but most true, that some of our Carriage Horses falling into their Hands, when they found Soap and Starch, carried for the Use of our Laundresses, they thinking them

to be some dainty Meats, did eat them greedily, and when they stuck in their Teeth, cursed bitterly the Gluttony of us English Churls, for so they term us."

Here is another which not only bears a suspicious appearance, but which is grossly and palpably untrue.

"These Irish sleep under the Canopy of Heaven, or in a poor House of Clay, or in a Cabbin made of the Boughs of Trees, and covered with Turf, *for such are the Dwellings of the very Lords among them.*"

I pass over a great many assertions which might admit of stout argumentation, being in a hurry to acquaint the public with an invaluable but now obsolete method of keeping themselves comfortable in the coldest weather, which will doubtless be put in practice forthwith, by the whole community, more particularly by rheumatic persons. When the Irishmen went to sleep, they proceeded in this manner:—

"Their bodies being naked, they cover their Heads and upper Parts with their Mantles, which they first make very wet, steeping them in Water on purpose, for they find that when their Bodies have once warmed the wet Mantles, the Smoak of them keeps their Bodies in temperate Heat all the Night following."

Readers of the Magazine, can you look upon this as a likely story? Is it probable that any man, with the sense and feeling of a man, should take delight in being dragged through a horsepond,—in being tossed in a wet blanket,—or sent to sleep with a well-steeped sack about his shoulders? Is it natural to think that he would enjoy agreeable slumbers, and pleasant dreams, with such a jacket tightly bound about his chest and windpipe, and softened perhaps every hour with a pail or two of spring water to keep up the warmth? He would certainly have abundance of reason to exclaim, with Sancho Panza, "Blessed be the man that first invented sleep," though I will stake my word, that he would not derive very much benefit from the invention.

These are a few samples of the sort of matter which is contained in Moryson's Description of Ireland; sufficient, it is hoped, to weigh the Learned Secretary in the balance, and to decide whether or not he is found wanting. B—.

This Author was born in Lincolnshire, 1566, and died in 1614. His works are: An Itinerary; containing 12 years' travels through the principal parts of the Continent, as well as England, Scotland, and Ireland.—And a History of Ireland, from 1599 to 1603: with a short narrative of the state of the kingdom from 1169—to which is added a Description of Ireland here quoted. Common Edition. 2 vols. 8vo. Dublin, 1735.